

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /069 W

----- 129392

R 161318Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3675

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PORS ASEC US KU EG IS

SUBJECT: INEFFECTIVENESS OF CALL FOR WORKERS STRIKE AND

CANCELLATION OF DEMONSTRATIONS IN PROTEST OF

SINAI ACCORD KUWAIT.

REF: KUWAIT 3720

1. FOR VARIETY OF REASONS, SOME OF WHICH TELL US  
SOMETHING ABOUT  
GOVERNMENT OF KUWAIT'S (GOK) ACTUAL POLITICAL  
STANCE REGARDING SINAI AGREEMENT, DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH WERE  
PLANNED TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 15 WERE CALLED OFF. WORKERS'  
STRIKE WHICH WAS TO ACCOMPANY THEM WAS REDUCED TO VOLUNTARY  
CLOSING OF SOME COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS AND TO WORK NON-  
ATTENDANCE BY MANY OF THE PALESTINIANS EMPLOYED IN KUWAIT.

2. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER ORGANIZERS EVER GOT AROUND TO  
PETITIONING MINISTRY OF INTERIOR FOR PERMISSION TO HOLD  
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DEMONSTRATIONS, SINCE THERE WERE APPARENTLY DISAGREEMENTS

AMONG PARTICIPATING ELEMENTS AS TO WHETHER DEMONSTRATIONS, IF HELD, WERE LIKELY TO TURN OUT THE WAY THEY WANTED THEM. IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, IDEA FOR DEMONSTRATIONS DIED NATURAL DEATH DUE TO DIVISIONS WITHIN THE PLANNERS ABOUT THREE DAYS AGO. PALESTINIANS AND KUWAITI POLITICAL AND POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS DID, HOWEVER, UNITE IN CALL FOR GENERAL STRIKE YESTERDAY IN PROTEST AGAINST SINAI AGREEMENT. ANNOUNCEMENTS HAD BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO VARIOUS LABOR, STUDENT, WRITERS, TEACHERS AND OTHER POPULAR ORGANIZATION MEMBERS URGING THEM TO REFUSE TO GO TO WORK. THE CALL INCLUDED GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS PETROCHEMICAL WORKERS' UNIONS.

3. THIS STEP WAS MET WITH UNEXPECTEDLY FIRM GOVERNMENT REACTION. GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN AND MINISTER OF STATE ABD-AL-AZIZ HUSSEIN ANNOUNCED THAT GOVERNMENT DISAPPROVED OF GENERAL STRIKES AND THAT NO GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE WOULD BE EXCUSED FROM WORK TO PARTICIPATE IN ONE SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 15. MINISTER OF INTERIOR SHAYKH SA'D ALSO MADE SOME TOUGH STATEMENTS INDICATING THAT QUICK ARREST WAS IN STORE FOR ANYONE PARTICIPATING IN DEMONSTRATIONS OR CAUGHT PRESSURING BUSINESSMEN TO CLOSE THEIR ESTABLISHMENTS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THESE STATEMENTS LED PALESTINIAN AND KUWAITI ORGANIZERS OF THE STRIKE TO MEET WELL INTO THE NIGHT SEPTEMBER 14 TO REVIEW ALTERNATIVES OPEN TO THEM IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT FIRMNESS. IN ONE MAJOR DEVELOPMENT, REPRESENTATIVES OF KUWAITI LABOR ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE PETROCHEMICAL WORKERS, REPORTEDLY WITHDREW THEIR SUPPORT FROM STRIKE IDEA, CLAIMING THAT ISSUE HAD BECOME TOO POLITICIZED AND WAS NO LONGER AN APPROPRIATE ONE TO BE MET BY TRADE UNIONISM METHODS.

4. AS IT TURNED OUT, THERE WERE SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF CLOSURES OF SMALL SHOPS FOR THE STRIKE, AND SOME LARGE PRIVATE FIRMS OPENED WITH ONLY SKELETON STAFFS. ALL GOVERNMENT OFFICES FUNCTIONED. POLICE PROTECTION AT U.S. AND EGYPTIAN EMBASSIES WAS INCREASED DRAMATICALLY AND VERY OBVIOUSLY, BUT NO INCIDENTS OCCURRED. THE SURPRISINGLY FIRM GOVT POSITION APPARENTLY TOOK THE STEAM OUT OF EFFORTS TO PORTRAY REACTION TO THE SINAI ACCORD IN TERMS OF WIDESPREAD, HOSTILE OPPOSITION.  
STOLTZFUS

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## Message Attributes

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